

PREFACE

The title of this publication “Shifts in Mapping. Maps as a Tool of Knowledge” began life as an online Symposium of the same name, which was organized by the FHNW Academy of Art and Design in Basel, Switzerland on January 20 and 21, 2021. Complementary to this Symposium, an Exhibition “Shaping the Invisible World” at HeK (House of Electronic Arts Basel), Switzerland took place between March 3 and May 23. The jointly conceived formats involved an inquiry into cartography and the representation of the world as a tool between knowledge and technology. The events aimed to shed light on our fascination with maps in order to highlight the tension between counter-maps and hegemonic top-down approaches of IT companies. With Web 2.0, and the possibility of generating one’s own maps, the map is gaining enormous ground in terms of its importance as a knowledge tool. This aspect necessitated a focus on issues of democratization, access, and technology.

This book is the product of design researcher Dr. Christine Schranz. Furthermore, it was inspired by the collaboration with HeK (House of Electronic Arts Basel) and the Exhibition’s joint curation with Boris Magrini. This book has been organized into two parts:

Part I

contains essays written from the ground up, originally initiated at the Shifts in Mapping Symposium and which are the result of further exchange and research.

Part II

is dedicated to the Exhibition Shaping the Invisible World, which was an integral part of the Symposium and further artistic research into bottom-up, counter, and critical mapping and mapmaking.